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ABSTRACT

The faculty of one rural middle school in Ohio received professional development funds to implement a 5-year school improvement plan (Ohio's Venture Capital initiative). A study of the project investigated: (1) how the experience affected teachers' perceptions of their roles as reflective practitioners and as resources to their colleagues; (2) how the experience affected their conceptions of their responsibilities for teacher and student learning; and (3) what conditions increased their commitment to and enthusiasm toward professional development. Researchers examined proficiency test scores, competency-based assessments in reading and writing, faculty opinion surveys, Dimensions of Excellence surveys, student interviews, teacher focus group interviews, a posted checklist of teacher activities, teacher journals, and team Venture Capital notebooks. Results indicate that the school improvement initiative has changed the nature of the school's professional development. Project funding has allowed regular attendance at professional conferences. Teachers have begun to take charge of their own growth and reflect on their knowledge. A core group has identified school needs to be addressed. There has been an increase in building norms of collegiality and cooperation. Teachers have begun to assume more responsibility for their students' learning. (SM)

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Reform in Middle-Level Education: Roles, Relationships, and Reality

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Since the appearance in 1986 of the Carnegie Commission report entitled A Nation Prepared: Teachers for the 21st Century and the Holmes Group report on Tomorrow's Teachers, a new wave of educational reform has focused attention on restructuring schools through the more active involvement and decision-making of teachers and principals. In such schools, efforts toward teacher-led restructuring have resulted in a variety of activities designed to increase teacher ownership of and leadership in school improvement. Teachers, principals, and others work together to define their professional vision and to plan changes which will improve education for their students.

Purpose

The purpose of this study was to explore the impact that a systemic reform initiative had on a cohort of middle-level teachers. The faculty of an area rural middle school received professional development funds through a competitive school improvement grant program sponsored by the state's department of education (Ohio's Venture Capital initiative) . Research questions were designed to investigate 1) how professional development experiences affected teachers' perceptions of their roles as reflective practitioners and as resources to their colleagues, 2) how these experiences affected teachers' conceptions of their responsibilities for teacher and student learning, and 3) what conditions seemed to increase teachers' commitment and enthusiasm toward professional development.

Research Foundations

Recent research has recognized a close connection between the professional development of teachers and the development of the students they teach. We are beginning to understand that schools which develop collaborative, inquiring workplace environments for teachers also may create these kinds of conditions for students (Lieberman, 1992). When teachers are part of a professional community devoted to teamwork and knowledge-sharing, then student learning becomes the focus of any change efforts. Being part of a professional community helps teachers to recognize their own expertise and, through sharing with their peers, to expand their ideas of what is possible in their own practice (Lichtenstein, McLaughlin, & Knudsen, 1992).

Existing school cultures, however, often have lacked norms of collegiality and collaboration, and have more frequently been characterized by teachers' isolation and fear of revealing lack of expertise (Rosenholtz, 1989). Such schools do not provide a climate conducive to the kinds of shared inquiry and peer support which lead to significant and lasting school improvement. Fullan (1991) defined change as a complex process which takes place incrementally and developmentally over time and which involves anxiety and uncertainty. Sarason (1995) has reminded us that restructuring schools is problem-producing as well as problem-resolving. Addressing these problems requires the combined participation of educators, researchers, and the wider community (Lieberman, 1995).

Significant, sustained school improvement will be facilitated when restructuring policies address these issues of culture by focusing organization and resources at the local and building

levels (Darling-Hammond, 1995). Ohio's Venture Capital initiative is an example of recently instituted state and local policies which support site-based efforts toward teacher-initiated staff development in order to create better learning environments for students. Many have described the difficulty of effecting any meaningful change in schools through "top-down" directives (Fullan, 1991; Lieberman, 1995; Sarason, 1995). If bottom-up initiatives are to succeed better, then we need to know more about how to facilitate school-based change efforts.

Methodology

Research Design

This study employed a descriptive research design. The research questions were explored over the course of the first three years of the restructuring initiative (1993-94 through 1995-96). The study is a work-in-progress and research activities will continue throughout the final two years of the five year Venture Capital Initiative. There were a variety of measures employed to describe changes in teachers' perceptions toward professional development, their roles, and their instruction. These measures, combined with participant observation, served as the basis for exploring the research questions. Building and district faculty and administration were involved in the selection and development of several of the measures.

Participants

The middle school, containing 38 teachers and 770 students in grades 5-8, is located in a rural area and has served for many years as a partner school with the neighboring college's teacher education program. The Venture Capital application process required the building to select and implement a five year school improvement plan based on a specific school improvement model. They selected Ohio's "Classroom of the Future" model which, they believed, would best enable them to meet the changing needs of their students. The mission of this model is to develop an educational system that prepares students to live and work in the twenty-first century and helps students develop a commitment and capacity for lifelong learning.

The middle school's original proposal, written during the fall of 1993, noted that the school's "Belief Statements" were consistent with the Classroom of the Future recommendations but, that the staff, although "committed to adapting... instructional modes,...discovered a lack of critical instructional skills essential for making these adaptations possible." Thus, their five year plan was developed with the following yearly foci:

Year 1 - teaming (consensus building, group dynamics, peer coaching)
Year 2 - curriculum design (problem solving, critical thinking, interdisciplinary instruction)
Year 3 - instructional design (cooperative learning, questioning strategies)
Year 4 - assessment (multidimensional, authentic)
Year 5 - planning for continuous improvement (collaboration, proactive decisions)

Data Collection

Principal methods of data collection for the entire project evaluation process included the following: proficiency test scores; competency-based assessments in reading and writing; documentation of visitations, courses, and conferences; teacher checklists to record instructional methods and assessments, teacher journals, team Venture Capital notebooks; faculty opinion surveys; Dimensions of Excellence surveys (sent to parents, teachers, and students); a "learning wall"; student interviews; student interviews; and teacher focus group interviews. This report only focuses on those measures that addressed teachers' involvement in professional development activities and their perceptions toward professional development.

"Learning Wall". Teacher participation in visitations, courses, and conferences was noted in two ways: on a learning wall mounted in the office conference room where team meetings were held and on a teacher instructional activities checklist kept by individual teachers. The learning wall used during the 1994-95 and 1995-96 school years provided a way for teachers to note the specific conferences or sessions attended and/or visitations completed. The individual teacher checklists provided a space for individual teachers to note the number of conferences, visitations, and courses attended each nine weeks.

Teacher Journals. One evaluation measure used during the 1994-95 school year was a teacher journaling process where several teachers in the building submitted 2-4 typed pages of reflection every two weeks during the second semester. Five middle school teachers participated in the journaling process. The writing prompt was to "write whatever you wish related to the project; your entries can include reports of activities, concerns you or others have, problems that have come up, your judgment of the effectiveness of activities or efforts, what you wish were happening, etc." The themes and topics that emerged from the teacher journals served as the basis for the 1996 focus group questions.

Focus Group. In late March, 1996, a focus group interview was held with nine middle school teachers who were involved in the 1995-96 Conversation Series. All grade levels and special needs were represented in the discussion group. A semi-structured interview format was used during the one and one-half hour interview.

Faculty Opinion Survey. A faculty opinion survey jointly designed by the districts' administrative team and the research team was administered district-wide for the first time at a professional development session in February, 1995 and for the second time at a similar session in February, 1996. This survey was designed to determine teachers' perceptions toward the development, implementation, and significance of the Venture Capital initiatives in their respective buildings.

Teacher Instructional Alternative Checklists. A primary goal of year three of the Venture Capital initiative was to explore a variety of instructional strategies and to establish a baseline for

frequency of strategy use. The research team and building's steering committee designed an instructional method and assessment method checklist and the middle school staff agreed to use it during the 1995-96 year to establish baseline data. On a weekly basis, teachers were to note if they used a particular instructional method.

Participant-Observation. Early in the Venture Capital initiative, the building steering committee and principal felt a need to enlist the services of a consultant who could help facilitate grant implementation. As a result, when the seond year began, a local teacher educator began working with the steering committee to plan and carry out grant-related activities. The consultant attended steering committee meetings and faculty retreats, served as college instructor of record for the "Conversations Series" graduate classes offered, consulted informally with the principal, secured resources, and occasionally conducted the faculty professional development sessions. The participant-observation yielded field notes which provided a narrative of the implementation process and descriptions of teachers' perceptions of that process

Data Analysis

Survey and checklist responses were summarized using the computer statistical package SPSS. Further data analysis involved identifying themes as they were suggested by other data sources and then demonstrating support for emerging patterns (Bogdan & Taylor, 1975). These emerging themes and other data summaries were then examined to determine how they addressed the research questions. Data analysis is on-going and the findings to date have been used in planning the final two years of the Venture Capital initiative.

Results

Chronology of Events

The first year of the project (93-94) provided very little time for professional development opportunities. The proposal was written at the beginning of the 1993-94 school year with application interviews held in late winter. Notification of the funding award was not received until late March, 1994. Thus the first year's activities focused on establishing a steering committee and developing plans for a two-day summer planning retreat. The summer retreat provided extended time for the faculty and administrative staff (including secretaries) to review and discuss the goals of middle level education, the recommendations of the Classroom of the Future model, and the extent to which these goals and recommendations were currently driving instruction.

Considerable time was spent on expanding the "teaming" concept (the year one grant focus) as well as issues related to curricular design. Each team agreed to complete two interdisciplinary units during the 1994-95 school year and the building agreed to offer another "Conversation Series" class focusing on several instructional and curricular issues central to successful middle level education. The Conversation Series class held during the 1994-95 school

was the third one in which the middle school teachers had participated. The Conversation Series concept had been developed and offered by the college's graduate program to provide teachers an opportunity to explore relevant issues and trends in education within the context of a graduate

class facilitated by area teacher educators and undergirded by current research and theory related to the teachers' topics of choice.

Ohio Department of Education directives and feedback early in the 1994-95 school year on the need to have "measurable" indicators of success resulted in considerable time and effort spent on refining those indicators. Several drafts were reviewed by the steering committee during the 1994-95 school year. These indicators helped focus 1995-96 school year planning as well as providing the basis for additional data collection. The indicators continued to be reviewed by the faculty during the 1995-96 school year with February, 1996 draft serving as the current version.

Year three, the 1995-96 school year, began with a focus on instructional design as originally planned. Teachers continued to visit teachers/schools which used a variety of instructional strategies, attended conferences with a focus on alternative instructional strategies, recorded their use of instructional strategies on the Instructional Alternative Checklist, and developed and completed a fifth conversation series that focused on instructional alternatives in middle level education.

Learning Wall/Teacher Documentation of Visitations, Courses, and Conferences Attended

For the 1994-95 school year, 98% of the teachers participated in at least one staff development activity. Almost half of the middle school teachers attended the Conversations Series course on a regular basis and approximately 75% of the teachers attended at least one session. For the 1995-96 school year, 69% of the teachers who completed the teacher checklists for at least one nine-week grading period indicated that they had attended at least one conference or session or had completed at least one visitation. The 1995-96 Conversations Series was comprised of ten middle school teachers. The percentage of teachers who participated in at least one staff development activity during the 1995-96 school year exceeded that of the previous year.

Teacher Journals

Journals were analyzed thematically with regard to the research questions. Journal responses clustered around the following topics: foundation and implementation of the initiative, key players, effects on teachers, learning activities, impact on student learning, barriers, and recommendations. As noted above, these topics then served as the basis for the 1996 focus group questions.

Both postive and negative comments about the Venture Capital initiative were detailed in teacher journals. Early on, teachers noted the benefit of having funds available for staff development "I have never been able to attend conferences of this nature before, as we previously

were responsible for paying our own way. I was not able to afford to attend conferences as a result." However, also early on teachers were responding to the "almost every day" nature of Venture Capital paperwork. Other early responses centered around the impact that the sudden death of the principal had on moving ahead with plans made during the August, 1994 retreat: "getting back on track has been a trying task". Other early concerns centered around the steering committee - how long one would need to serve on it, its role, the size of the committee, etc.

With respect to teacher effects, positive comments focused on better understanding and "more positive feelings toward the development of interdisciplinary units after working through the curriculum web" and a "better understanding of the Venture Capital process...so we can better evaluate ourselves on these points." Also noted were stumbling blocks to the teaming process, e.g., individual differences among team members, difficulties in reaching consensus, time needed to reach decisions, interruptions from outside sources. With respect to learning activities, frequent reference was made to the positive impact of both the Conversation Series on middle school practices and the Conversation Series on technology. Also positively reviewed was the original Salt Fork retreat as well as many opportunities to attend conferences and visit other schools.

Several commented on the amount of time grant implementation was taking. "The administrative tasks which are a part of the grant, as well as tasks which come from guidance and the office often take up a great deal of planning time." This seemed to be a frustration of many of the teams in the building. They felt they could get so much more done if they were not required to use their team time to complete other tasks. "All of the evaluation measures for the grant need to be perhaps condensed into fewer items so that teachers do not begin to resent the grant money offered."

With some, original negative opinions were replaced by more positive ones. "I felt that this project would be like all of the rest of the state and federally funded school programs - mostly a waste of time for both teachers and students. However, after much thought and consideration, I have come to the realization that, at least in my mind, Venture Capital has been good for my teaching and for my school."

Focus Group Interview

The interview lasted over one and one-half hours and was conducted using a semi-structured format. During the interview, participants indicated that they wished some of the information being discussed could be used to shape the last two years of the Venture Capital initiative. Thus, permission to share the common threads of the discussion and recommendations that emerged was requested and granted by participating teachers. A member check was conducted with interview participants in May, 1995 before sharing the interview summary with the entire building faculty and administration.

When asked "How would you describe yourself in terms of how you approached staff development opportunities prior to Venture Capital?", responses centered around lack of funds

and limited participation of teachers. The related question "What is different about staff development now" yielded responses similar to the following: "The content of staff development has changed...it used to be more fragmented and isolated...everybody did their own thing, while now there is a much greater attempt to take a more integrated look at middle level education."

A question regarding staff involvement in the development of the Venture Capital grant revealed that even though just a small group of teachers actually wrote the grant (on a volunteer basis), the "group always brought ideas back to the staff" for consideration by grade level teams, etc. Several agreed with the comment "I'm not sure we recognized the significance" of the VC proposal and the impact it could have on the school.

When asked "How involved were you/are you (and others) in the decision-making processes associated with VC planning and implementation?", all interviewees indicated they were greatly involved in the process but that there were others in the building who chose not to be involved. Reactions ranged from "some people feel they are forced into things they are not ready for [in Venture Capital]", to "drag them along kicking and screaming". Several indicated it was difficult not to take it personally when a team member indicated he/she is not interested or doesn't care. A final comment to this question also seemed to represent several in the group, "There are people trying things who have just have not tried these things in the past."

The question of how the VC initiative had affected them personally brought quick response about more work and truckloads of paperwork. All agreed that the initiative has made them more self-reflective and self-evaluative and that self-reflection is the key. Other responses included the following: "We go more places than we would have in the past"; "We have learned not to impose what "you know is right" on somebody else"; "The staff development opportunities (visitations, etc.) provided a "reality check on yourself and your school". They noted that even though the middle school has come a long way on the continuum of appropriate/exemplary middle school practice, "there are areas where we say we are wonderful, but we are not; we are way back there." Other shared responses to this question included that future progress might be limited "because of other 'things' that cannot be supplied through Venture Capital." The related question "Does it ever feel like overload" yielded the following responses: there has been time to set a few broad goals and act on them; MORE TIME is needed to go back and digest, to reflect, to talk and plan together, and then to implement the new ideas; and it is time to put TALK into ACTION.

The question "To what extent was the use of Venture Capital monies what you expected it would be?" brought the general response that it has been great to be treated so well - food, perks, stipends, etc., but what will happen to those "extras" when the money runs out? The consensus seemed to be that it would be helpful to be able to spend at least some of the funds for teaching materials and technology-related equipment and that there was a worry that at the end of five years they would have "nothing to show for" the money expended, although they did view themselves as a developing resource.

The question "How have your feelings changed about yourself in relationship to staff development?" brought varied responses. Several had comments similar to "It has allowed me to change what I do for kids...I think that is the purpose." There were mixed feelings on peer sharing of teaching strategies - are the ideas neat enough? Will people want to listen? What if I get a negative response? What difference does it make what people say anyhow? Teachers still did not seem to view themselves as "experts" nor feel that being viewed as an "expert" would be a desirable way to be viewed. Much discussion followed about what would enable teachers to feel more comfortable sharing ideas with peers. Suggestions made included sharing with one peer, putting ideas in mailboxes, having regular time at staff development sessions to share, encouragement to do so, and having an accepting environment.

All agreed that the bottom line was "Am I helping out students?". However the question was raised that with the tension between "proficiency testing formats" and innovative instructional strategies that are not reflected in the testing formats, teachers might be doing their students a "disservice" with respect to proficiency test preparation.

Faculty Opinion Survey

Middle school teachers' responses were consistent with the district-wide teacher responses. When comparing the middle school teachers' 1995 responses with their 1996 responses there was an increase in agreement to the statement on 14 of the 18 questions, with the greatest increases in agreement on the following statements (paraphrased):

1.	I understand the goals of Venture Capital (VC).	40%-84%
2.	My building colleagues understand VC goals.	31%-72%
3.	I support the goals of VC in our building.	49%-75%
6.	VC activities in our building are resulting in increased student learning. (To a great extent or more)	14%-38%
11.	The VC indicators of success are appropriate for our goals.	63%-81%
12.	The VC indicators of success for our building are written in measurable terms that we can document.	23%-69%
15.	The VC initiative will result in significantly improved instruction.	50%-72%
16.	The VC initative will result in significantly improved student learning.	61%-78%

On the survey, teachers also were asked to complete statements related to 1) VC activities that have had the greatest impact on their teaching and other duties, 2) changes they have seen in student learning as a result of building involvement in VC activities, and 3) ways that the building is different now as a result of VC activities. Comments regarding statement one included the positive impact of the staff retreat (working and playing together), team planning time, constant self and building evaluation of "current level of teaching", greater focus on interdisciplinary teaching and unit development, participation at more conferences and visitations, additional staff development sessions, release time during school which encourages greater faculty participation,

greater awareness of instructional options, influence of the Conversation Series on teaching, as well as more paperwork. However, three teachers indicated the Venture Capital grant had had no impact on their teaching.

A recurring response to the second statement was that students are "becoming more active learners", are "involved in more in-depth study of topics", and are exposed to a wider variety of instructional strategies. It was also noted by several that "more teachers feel good about what they are doing because they now are aware of what other schools are/are not doing." One teacher noted that she saw a "higher percentage of honors/high honors designations and fewer failing grades." Another noted that "technology is slowly becoming a part of teachers' and students' everyday learning experiences." Several (three), however, noted no changes in student learning.

In responding to statement three, the majority of the teachers noted that there was more interest in, discussion about and willingness to try "new ideas". This enthusiasm had led to greater team effort and cooperation and the use of a wider variety of instructional strategies. Teachers are "thinking and talking about what they do in their classrooms". In a similar vein, it was noted that "our building does not automatically put down new ideas and concepts now - we're more willing to listen/talk/try out new things". Many saw more teaming at all levels. Others viewed the curriculum mapping and greater focus on selecting appropriate curriculum as ways the building is different now. Several noted how such activities as "scheduling" were becoming "more of a building concern rather than an administrative responsibility." However, it should be noted that two faculty respondents indicated that "Venture Capital is a dirty word" and others noted that the key way that the building was different was "more stress" and "more meetings".

Teacher Instructional Alternative Checklist

Appendix A lists instructional methods in order of frequency of use during the first nine week period and then compares the average instances per week (or average number of teachers using that method in a week) during the first nine week period to average number of uses per week in the other nine week periods. Also compared are the percentages of teachers who used a particular strategy in any one nine week period.

Throughout the 1995-96 school year, individual student work remained the most frequently used instructional method with question/answer and small group instruction increasing slightly as the year progress. Also increasing toward the end of the year were student led activities and research projects, increases likely to occur as students gain knowledge in a subject area. Instructional methods used least throughout the year were computer technology, role playing, debates, and field trips. Also noted on the teacher checklist was the types of assessments used during each nine week period. Appendix A also contains summary data on assessment alternatives. Throughout the year, teacher observation remained the most frequently noted assessment method, followed by performance measures and objective tests. Least frequently used measures were essay tests and portfolios. Increases in use of student reflection, student projects,

exhibitions/displays, and experiments as the year progressed were noted.

Field Notes

The first activity of the second year (1994-95) was an in-service meeting devoted to setting goals and identifying topics about which teachers want to learn more. At this point the steering commitee's chief concern was how grant money should be spent most effectively to provide staff development related to curriculum design, the second-year grant focus. They decided to allocate an equal amount of funds to each teacher, allowing them to enroll in the Conversations Series or to attend conferences or other professional growth opportunities. Discussions of topics to be explored through the class reflected diverse understandings among teachers on the purposes of grant activities. Conversations Series were limited to presentations by the consultant or outside speakers on selected topies.

The third year of the grant (1995-96) was intended to focus on the development of instructional strategies. A continuing observation with this faculty was a rejection of the "outside expert", coupled with an equal reluctance to use each other as experts. Even though the consultant urged them to find opportunities to share ideas or report on what they learned from concferences, teachers believed that others would not want to listen. Therefore, the Conversation Series classes continued to rely on guest speakers and peer discussions.

A critical point in the third year came when a state grant evaluator visited the school and summarized his observations to the steering committee. The following strengths and recommendations relate to the concerns of this study. First, he noted evidence that teams were accepting responsibility for addressing a variety of student needs. Also, increased teaming had created more open dialogue, more collaborative teacher planning, and more use of interdisciplinary units. However, he expressed concern about the lack of teacher consensus and the need to focus change efforts on fundamental issues instead of pursuing individual interests.

The evaluator's visit appeared to lower the morale of the committee who interpreted the comments as criticism of their efforts. However, a few months later, as noted above, the focus interview identified some successes and generated new confidence. Teachers also discovered a common concern with improving students' reading across the curriculum, and the consultant facilitated a small group exploration of relevant teaching strategies. Teachers began to experiment with strategies and one even made a conference presentation. Eight teachers shared strategies at a building professional development session.

The fourth year began with a faculty retreat. A report from the evaluation team served as a member check for all the study's data sources. Teachers believed that the summary accurately reflected their experiences. They agreed that the understanding of Venture Capital goals was growing among teachers. They also shared their on-going concerns with teachers' fear of sharing their developing expertise. With only two grant years' funding remaining, there was also concern expressed about how growth would continue "when the money runs out".

Summary and Interpretation

The school improvement initiative has changed the nature of professional development in the middle school investigated in this study. Prior to project funding, professional development opportunities were rare, funds were limited, and professional travel was not encouraged. Attendance at professional conferences is now the norm, and a "learning wall" in the teacher conference room now documents the wide variety of teachers' professional growth activities.

Initially teachers thought staff development meant only that experts came from outside the school to demonstrate and model innovative practices. Now teachers are beginning to take charge of their own growth, to reflect on their knowledge, and to consider how professional development opportunities relate to the context of their own teaching. During the first three grant years, the teachers seemed to be casting about for new ideas in rather a random fashion, but as the fourth year is beginning, there is evidence that they are establishing a more clear focus for profssional growth. They have now learned enough about new strategies and middle school trends to expand their notions of what is possible. At the same time, a core group has identified areas of need in the school, and the Conversations Series will this year address these areas. Grant funds will no longer be allocated automatically to every teacher. Instead, teachers will submit proposals which relate their requests to Venture Capital goals.

An exciting development has been the slow increase in building norms of collegiality and sharing. A precedent has been set by a few teachers for presenting new teaching ideas to the whole staff, and last year one teacher made a conference presentation. There is still much resistance and fear attached to this because it is perceived by some as a claim of expertise which others might resent. However, teachers' comments in steering comittee meetings, staff meetings, and the focus group interview revealed increasing acceptance of the notion that they do have expertise to share. There is now a core of teachers who believe that such sharing is beneficial, and it is continuing on an informal level. This signals an important change toward teachers serving as resources for each other's professional development.

A similar shift has also begun to take place in the teachers' assumption of responsibility for their students' learning. This was evidenced by their identification of needs specific to their students, their recognition that these needs were not all being met, and their desire to learn about strategies to teach students more effectively. For example, the staff has worked on curriculum mapping activities together and teams have worked together to adjust schedules to allow for more in-depth study of topics and interdisciplinary units. Through commitment to completing the teacher instructional activities checklist, they have indicated a recognition of the need to use a variety of approaches. Initial feedback from those checklists as well as the other questions on the faculty opinion survey indicated that many teachers were beginning to increase the number and types of instructional alternative used. Recognition of student needs, however, is still largely focused on academic achievement and, according to the survey results, there are still a significant minority of teachers who are not sure that the Venture Capital initatives will have any significant impact on student learning. There is still little consensus on teachers' roles in meeting students' affective needs.

A major pattern that became apparent from a careful examination of all the research data was a fundamental change in teachers' dispositions toward the kinds of staff development that accompany school restructuring efforts. Data collected early in the study reflected a view of staff devleopment as intervention. Venture Capital was seen by some teachers as an initiative to bring in outside expertise to "fix" their teaching. This view, involving as it did, a tacit acknowledgement that something was wrong with current teaching, created a defensive stance among some faculty. By the end of the third grant year, this attitude was changing noticeably, and the change was documented by data from such diverse sources as teacher journals, focus group contributions, and observations of committee meetings and Conversation Series. There is much evidence of an emerging concept of staff development as a long-term process that is teacher-driven, teacher-constructed, and teacher-evaluated. As one teacher said, "It's going to be a long time down the road before we see results," but this staff believes it is going in the right direction.

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